

Two New Lizards from Western Australia (Genera *Diplodactylus* and *Lerista*)

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Abstract

Two new species of lizard, the gecko *Diplodactylus wilsoni* and the skink *Lerista haroldi*, are described from the arid mid-west of Western Australia.

Introduction

The large genera *Diplodactylus* and *Lerista* are notable for the number of species with extremely circumscribed ranges, e.g. *D. fulleri*, *D. wombeyi*, *L. neander* and *L. separanda*. To these we add another two species, *D. wilsoni* and *L. haroldi*, that are only known from a single locality or very small area.

Systematics

Family Gekkonidae

Diplodactylus wilsoni sp. nov.

Figure 1

Holotype

R78932 in Western Australian Museum collected on 28 July 1982 by S.K. Wilson at 25 km NNW of Waldburg, Western Australia, in 24°33'S, 117°14'E.

Paratypes

North-West Division (W.A.)

19 km SW Waldburg (81213-5) and 21 km SW (78931); Mt Clere Station (78930).

Diagnosis

An aberrant rock-inhabiting member of the *D. strophurus* group (Kluge 1967; Russell and Rosenberg 1981) with homogeneous dorsals, without pre-anal pores and without supraciliary or supracaudal spines. Most like *D. rankini* Storr but having a shorter tail, no dorsolateral series of tubercles on body, and a very different colour pattern (faint longitudinal stripes).

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Figure 1 Paratype of *Diplodactylus wilsoni*, photographed in life by S.K. Wilson.

Description

Snout-vent length (mm) 28-56 (N 6, mean 47.5). Length of tail (% SVL): 42-54 (N 6, mean 48.3).

Rostral pentagonal, 2.7-3.4 times as wide as high, and with median groove extending down for 20-50% of height of scale. Nostril surrounded by first labial, rostral, two supranasals and one postnasal. Anterior supranasals much larger than posterior supranasals and separated by one or two small scales. Posterior supranasals separated by 2-4 scales. Interorbitals 19-22. No supraciliary (or other) spines. Upper labials 9 or 10 back to middle of eye. Dorsal scales subconical, a little larger than ventrals. Supracaudal scales heterogenous, some scales being much larger and higher than others. Digits bearing large apical plates; lamellae under fourth toe 5-7, entire (except for a divided lamella at base of toe in one specimen). Pre-anal pores absent in both sexes. Cloacal spur consisting of one or two white obtuse spines.

Upper surfaces brownish-grey except for reddish-brown apices of dorsal scales and for short, wide, finely black-edged, grey longitudinal stripes on head, neck and shoulders (stripes barely discernible, owing to their being only slightly paler than ground colour; remnants of stripes, especially their black edges, sometimes discernible further back on body and on ventral surfaces). Iris greyish-blue, with a fine anastomosis of black lines.

Distribution

Arid mid-western interior of Western Australia.

Remarks

This species is named after its sole collector, Stephen Karl Wilson. All specimens were found in vertical crevices in dolerite and quartz sandstone.

D. wilsoni links the *strophurus* and *michaelseni* groups. In its caudal glands and circumnarial and subdigital scalation, *wilsoni* agrees with the *strophurus* group; but in its colour pattern and lack of pre-anal pores, spines and dorsal tubercles, it approaches the *michaelseni* group. Russell and Rosenberg (1981) unite the *strophurus* and *michaelseni* groups (and *Diplodactylus elderi*) in the subgenus *Strophurus*.

Family Scincidae

Lerista haroldi sp. nov.

Figure 2

Holotype

R81199 in Western Australian Museum collected by G. Harold and C. Winton on 20 May 1982 at 0.5 km S of Gnaraloo HS, Western Australia, in 23°49'S, 113°31'E.



Figure 2 Holotype of *Lerista haroldi*, photographed in life by G. Harold.

Diagnosis

A short-tailed, moderately stout member of the *L. elegans* group (Storr 1972: 72) with 3 fingers, 3 toes and immovable eyelids. Distinguishable from *L. muelleri* by its pale, almost patternless coloration.

Description (of holotype, the only available specimen)

Snout-vent length 39 mm. Length of appendages etc. (% SVL): foreleg 8, hindleg 23, tail 102, snout to foreleg 28.

Nasals in contact. Frontoparietals in long contact, slightly larger than interparietal. Nuchals 2/2. Supraoculars 3, first two in contact with frontal. Supraciliaries 4. Temporals 1 + 2, upper secondary largest, lower secondary smallest. Upper labials 6. Midbody scale rows 20. Lamellae under third toe 14, very weakly keeled.

Upper surfaces pale pinkish-grey (head and back brownish-yellow in life). Top of head and temples finely speckled with dark greyish-brown. Dark brown streak from nostril to eye. Sutures between upper labials brown (barring widest and darkest anteriorly). Back and side of body faintly and very finely speckled with brownish-grey. Tail finely marked with blackish-grey, most strongly on upper surface (where markings mostly taking form of curved transverse lines); markings on lower surface shorter, paler, more broken, and longitudinally orientated. Lower surfaces whitish.

Distribution

Known from one locality on upper west coast of Western Australia.

Derivation of Name

After Gregory Harold, co-collector of the unique specimen.

References

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- Russell, A.P. and Rosenberg, H.I. (1981). Subgeneric classification in the gekkonid genus *Diplodactylus*. *Herpetologica* **37**: 86-92.
- Storr, G.M. (1972). The genus *Lerista* (Lacertilia, Scincidae) in Western Australia. *J. Proc. R. Soc. West. Aust.* **54**: 59-75.